

# Tensor Field Networks:

rotation-, translation-, and  
permutation-equivariant  
convolutional neural networks  
for 3D point clouds

*NeurIPS Molecules and Materials Workshop*  
2018.12.08

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Kearnes



Lusann  
Yang



Li  
Li

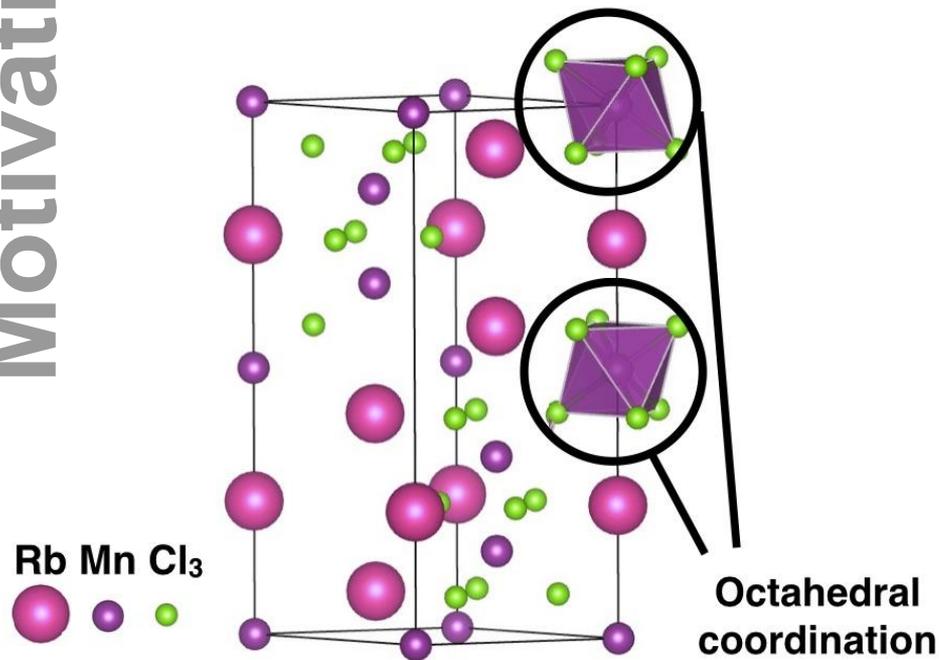


Kai  
Kohlhoff

# Motivation

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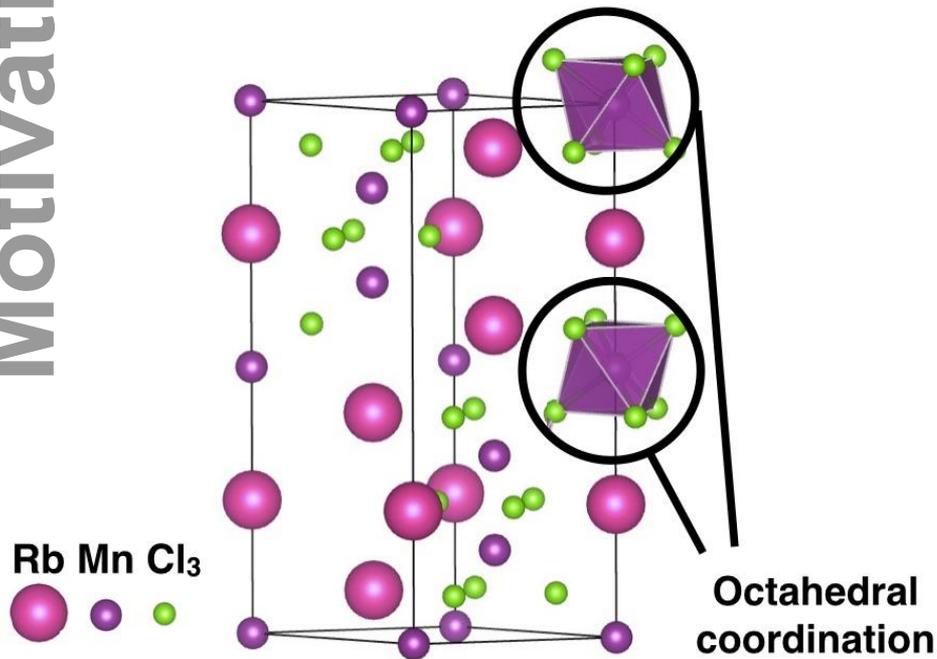
Atomic systems form geometric motifs that can appear at multiple locations and orientations.



*How can we identify these rotated and translated motifs using the same filters?*

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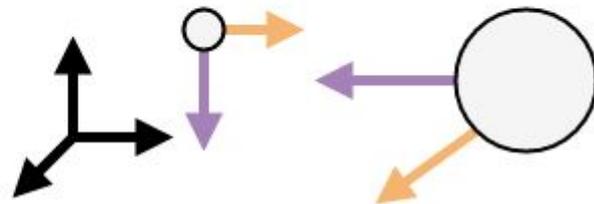
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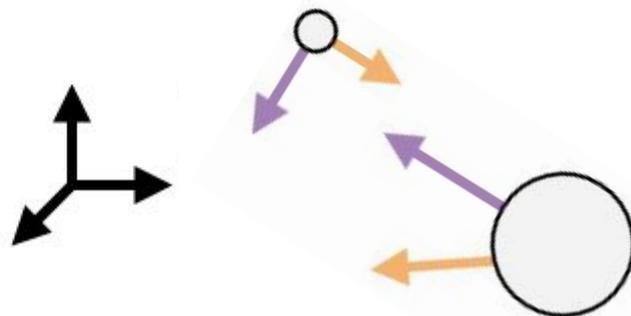
*How can we identify these rotated and translated motifs using the same filters?*

The properties of physical systems transform predictably under rotation.

Two point **masses** with **velocity** and **acceleration**.



Same system, with rotated coordinates.



*Can we construct a network that naturally handles these data types?*

We created a network that can naturally handle 3D geometry and features of physical systems.

- It can be applied to any type of atomic system (*molecules, materials, proteins, hybrid systems, nanoclusters, etc.*)
- And preserves geometric information (lengths **and** angles).

arXiv:1802.08219

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## Tensor Field Networks: Rotation- and Translation-Equivariant Neural Networks for 3D Point Clouds

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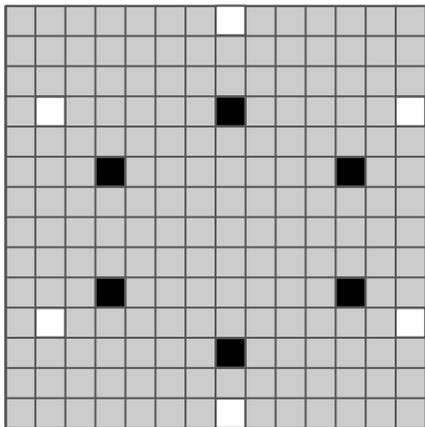
Nathaniel Thomas<sup>\*1</sup> Tess Smidt<sup>\*234</sup> Steven Kearnes<sup>4</sup> Lusann Yang<sup>4</sup> Li Li<sup>4</sup> Kai Kohlhoff<sup>4</sup> Patrick Riley<sup>4</sup>

### Abstract

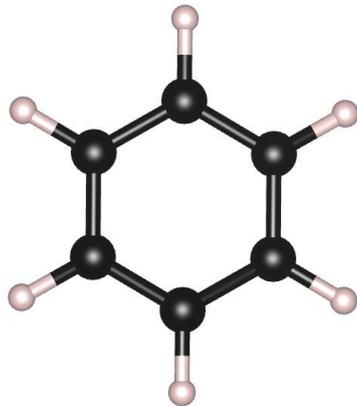
We introduce tensor field networks, which are locally equivariant to 3D rotations and translations (and invariant to permutations of points) at every layer. 3D rotation equivariance removes the need for data augmentation to identify features in arbitrary orientations. Our network uses filters built from spherical harmonics; due to the mathematical consequences of this filter choice, each

significantly more important in 3D than 2D. Without equivariant filters like those in our design, achieving an angular resolution of  $\delta$  would require a factor of  $\mathcal{O}(\delta^{-1})$  more filters in 2D but  $\mathcal{O}(\delta^{-3})$  more filters in 3D.<sup>1</sup> Second, a 3D rotation- and translation-equivariant network can identify local features in different orientations and locations with the same filters, which is helpful for interpretability. Finally, the network naturally encodes geometric tensors (such as scalars, vectors, and higher-rank geometric objects), mathematical objects that transform predictably under geometric

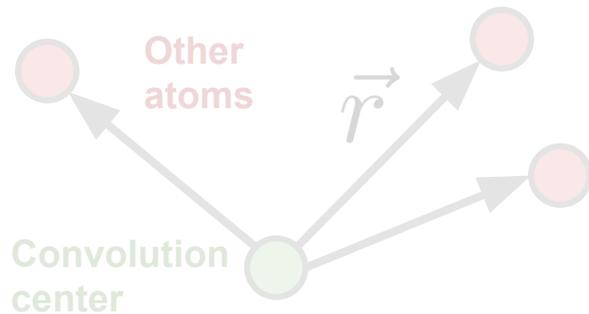
**We use points. Images of atomic systems are sparse and imprecise.**



**VS.**

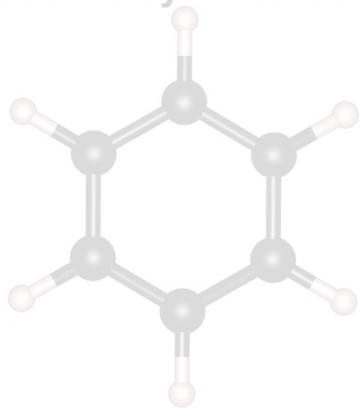


**We use continuous convolutions with atoms as convolution centers.**

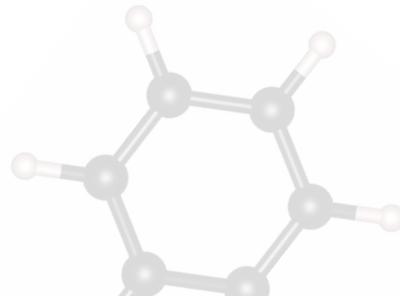


K. T. Schütt, P.-J. Kindermans, H. E. Sauceda, S. Chmiela, A. Tkatchenko, and K.-R. Müller, Adv. in Neural Information Processing Systems 30 (2017). (arXiv: 1706.08566)

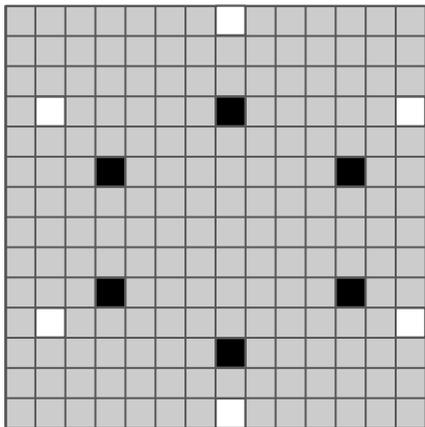
**We encode the symmetries of 3D Euclidean space (3D translation- and 3D rotation-equivariance).**



$$g \in SE(3)$$



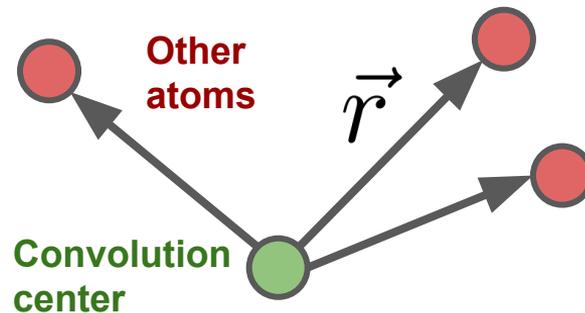
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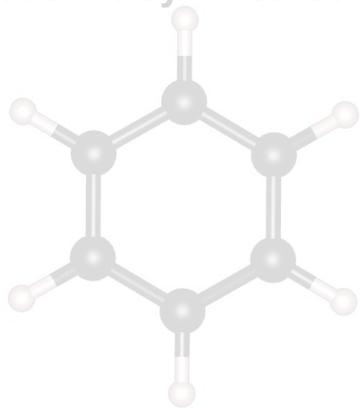


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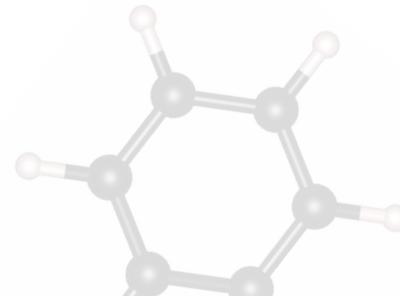


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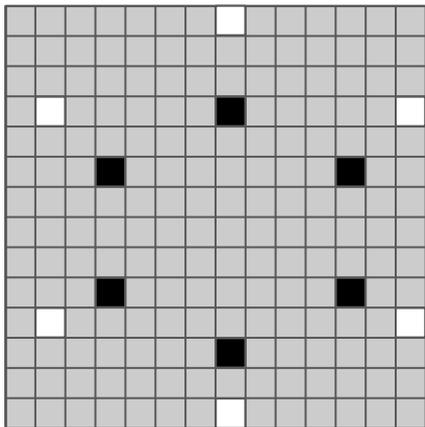
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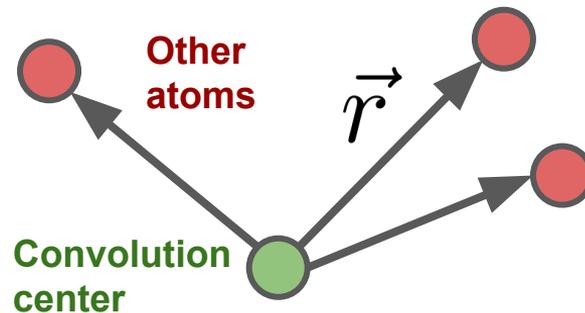
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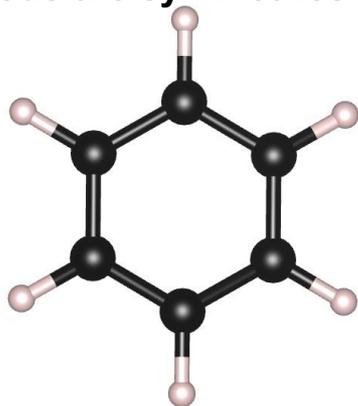


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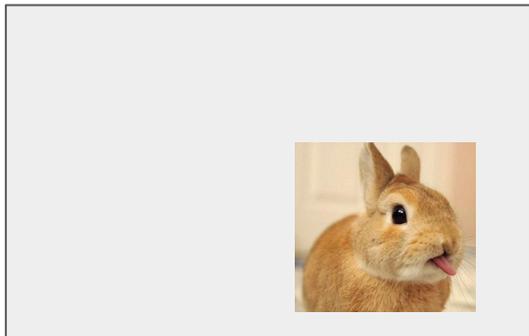
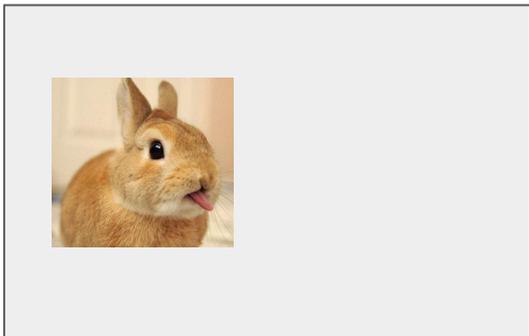
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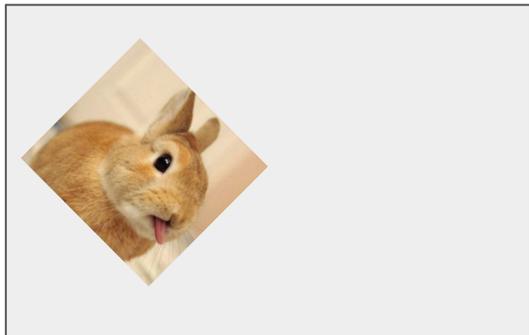
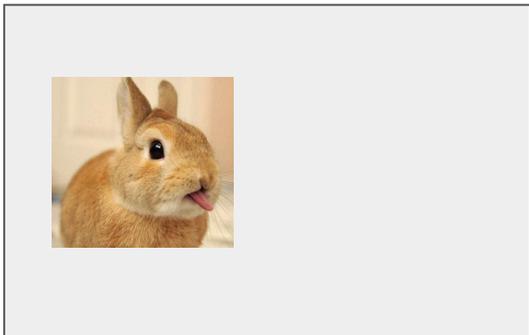


$$g \in SE(3)$$





## Translation equivariance



## Rotation equivariance



**Translation equivariance**  
Convolutional neural  
network ✓



**Rotation equivariance?**



## Translation equivariance

Convolutional neural network ✓



## Rotation equivariance

~~Data augmentation~~

~~Radial functions~~

*Want a network that both preserves geometry and exploits symmetry.*

Previous work on 2D rotation-equivariance uses filters based on circular harmonics.

To extend to 3D, we use spherical harmonics.

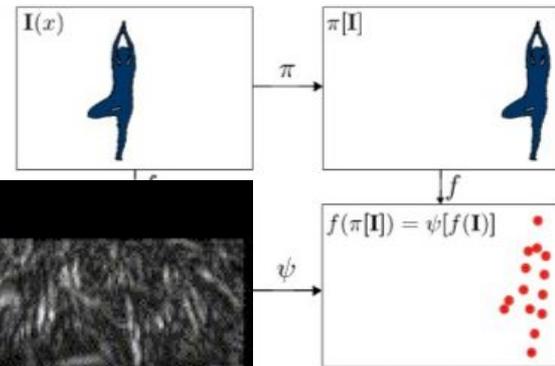
## Harmonic Networks: Deep Translation and Rotation Equivariance

Daniel E. Worrall, Stephan J. Garbin, Daniyar Turmukhambetov and Gabriel J. Brostow  
 {d.worrall, s.garbin, d.turmukhambetov, g.brostow}@cs.ucl.ac.uk  
 University College London\*

Apr 2017

### Abstract

*Translating or rotating an input image should not affect the results of many computer vision tasks. Convolutional neural networks (CNNs) are already translation equivariant: input image translations produce proportionate feature map translations.*



Equivariance in CNNs arises from the fact that a translation  $\pi$  of the input image  $\mathbf{I}$ ,



Rotated image

CNN filter output

Harmonic filter output

## Convolutional kernels...

Learned  
Parameters

with no symmetry:

$$W(\vec{r})$$

with 2D circular harmonics:

$$R(r)e^{im\phi}$$

with 3D spherical harmonics:

$$R(r)Y_l^m(\hat{r})$$

# Spherical harmonics

$$Y_l^m$$

$L = 0$



angular portion of  
hydrogenic wavefunctions

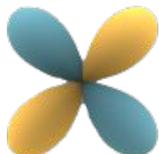
$L = 1$



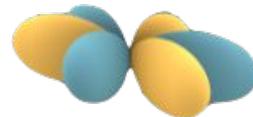
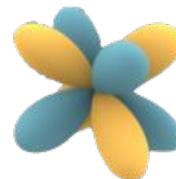
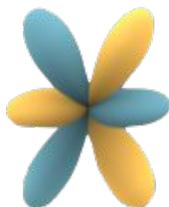
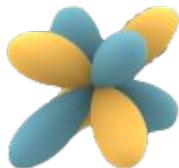
basis functions for  $(2l + 1)$   
dimensional irreducible  
representations of  $SO(3)$

basis functions for signals  
on a sphere

$L = 2$



$L = 3$



$m = -3$

$m = -2$

$m = -1$

$m = 0$

$m = 1$

$m = 2$

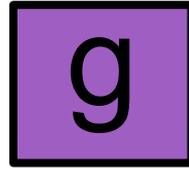
$m = 3$

[Inigo quilez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spherical_harmonics)

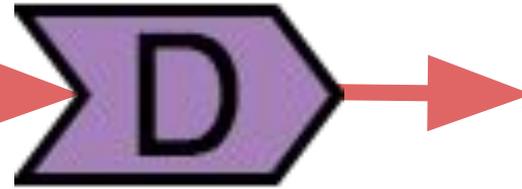
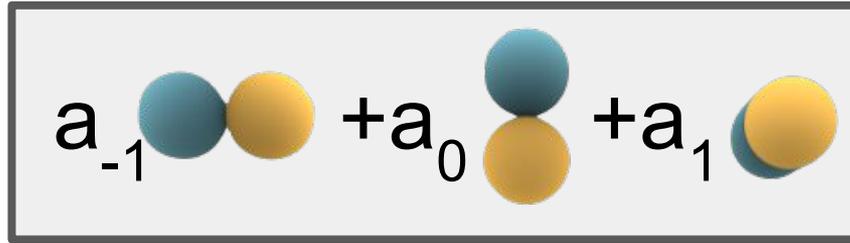
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# Spherical harmonics of a given L transform together under rotation.

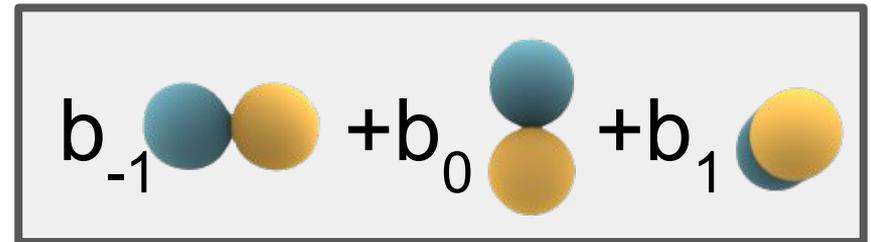
Let  $g$  be a 3d rotation matrix.



$D$  is the Wigner-D matrix. It has shape  $[2l + 1, 2l + 1]$  and is a function of  $g$ .



=



Going from 2D to 3D rotation-equivariance involves more than changing filters.

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For rotation matrices **A** and **B**...

In 2D:

**AB = BA** (abelian)

Irreducible representations of  $SO(2)$  are all 1D.

In 3D:

**AB  $\neq$  BA** (nonabelian)

Irreducible representations of  $SO(3)$  are  $(2l + 1)$  dimensional

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Irreducible representations of SO(3) are  $(2l + 1)$  dimensional

Our filter choice requires the input, filters, and output of our network to be **geometric tensors** and our network connectivity to be compatible with **tensor algebra**.

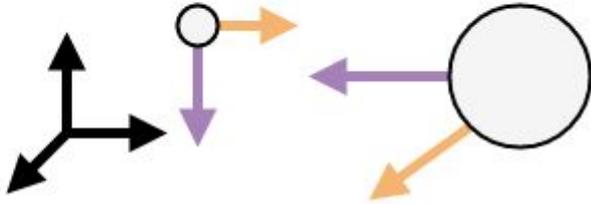
TensorFlow

MultidimensionalArray

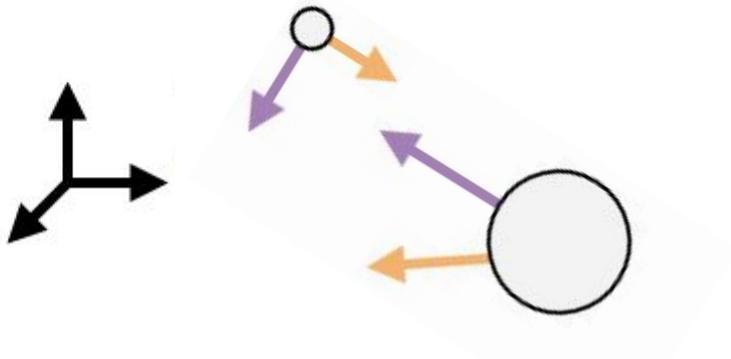
~~Tensor~~Flow

**Geometric tensors** transform predictably under 3D rotation.

Two point masses with **velocity** and **acceleration**.

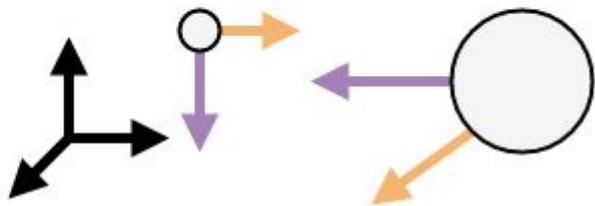


Same system, with rotated coordinates.

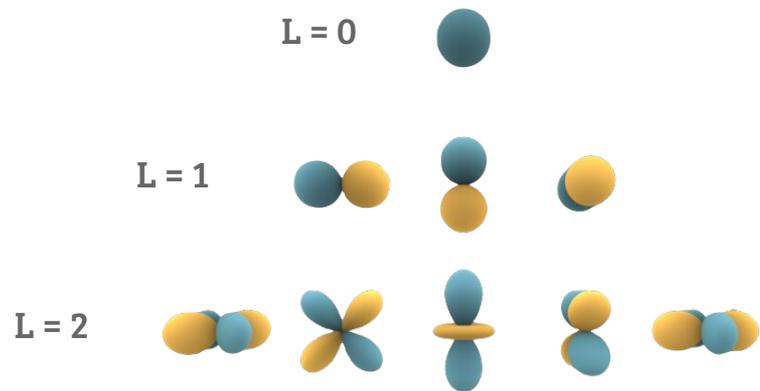
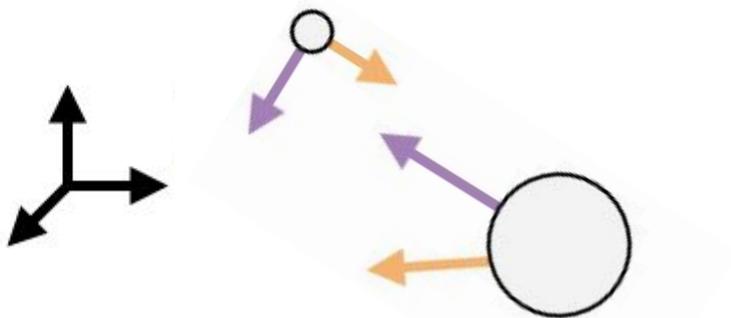


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Same system, with rotated coordinates.



Irreducible representations

Scalars fields  $l = 0$

Vectors fields  $l = 1$

3x3 Matrix fields  $l = 0 \oplus 1 \oplus 2$

The input and output of our network is represented as tensors with **point** (or atom), **channel**, and **representation** indices organized by irreducible representation.

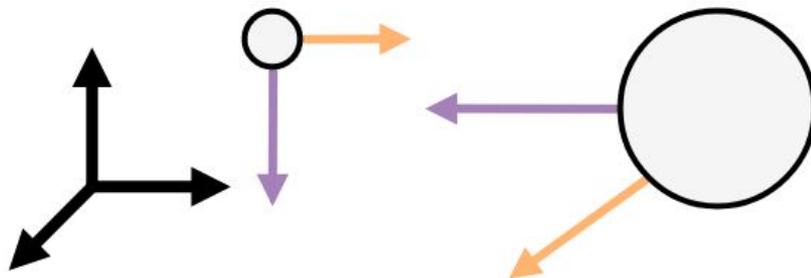
$$V^{(l)}_{acm} = \{0: [[m0], [m1]], 1: [[v0x, v0y, v0z], [a0x, a0y, a0z]], [[v1x, v1y, v1z], [a1x, a1y, a1z]]\}$$

$l$ : dictionary key,  $l$

$[ ]$  point index,  $a$

$[ ]$  channel index,  $c$

$[ ]$  representation index,  $m$



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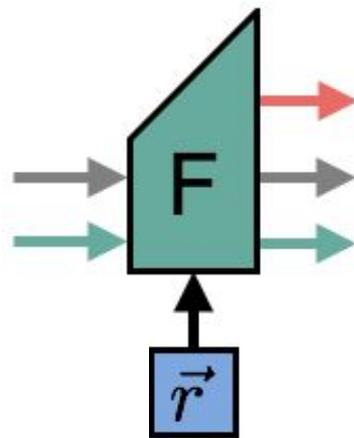
**Representation** →

**Points** →

**Channels** →

Filters contribute a **representation** index due to use of spherical harmonics.

$$R(r) Y_l^m(\hat{r})$$



**Representation** →

**Points** →

**Channels** →

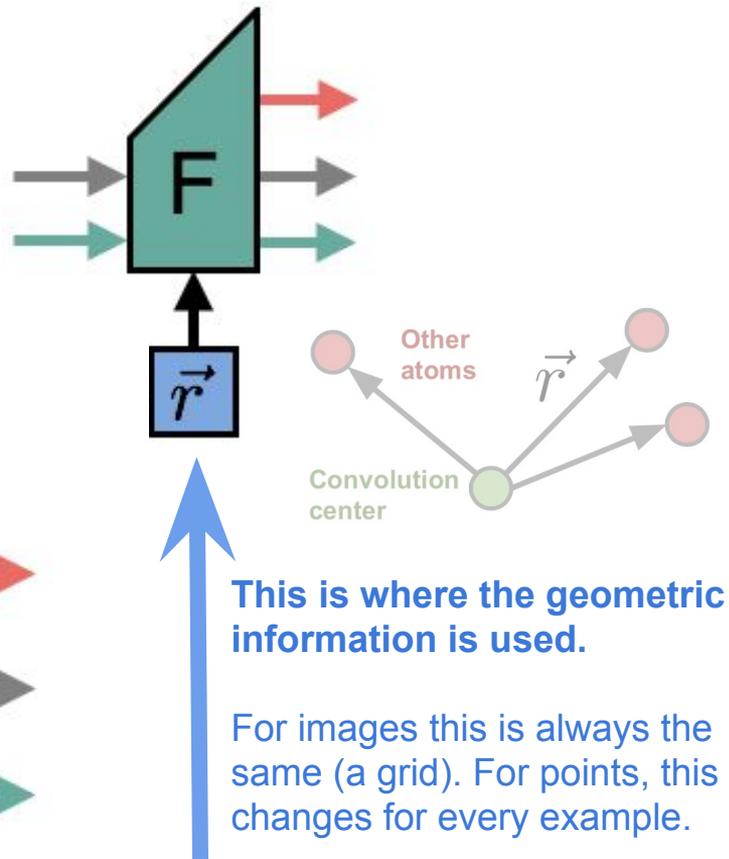
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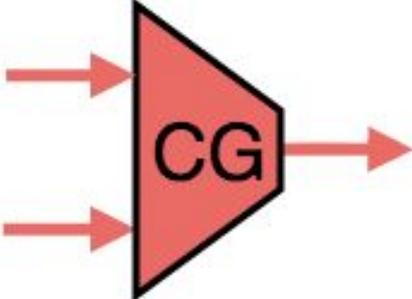
**Channels** →



This is where the geometric information is used.

For images this is always the same (a grid). For points, this changes for every example.

To combine two tensors to create one tensor, we use Clebsch-Gordan coefficients.



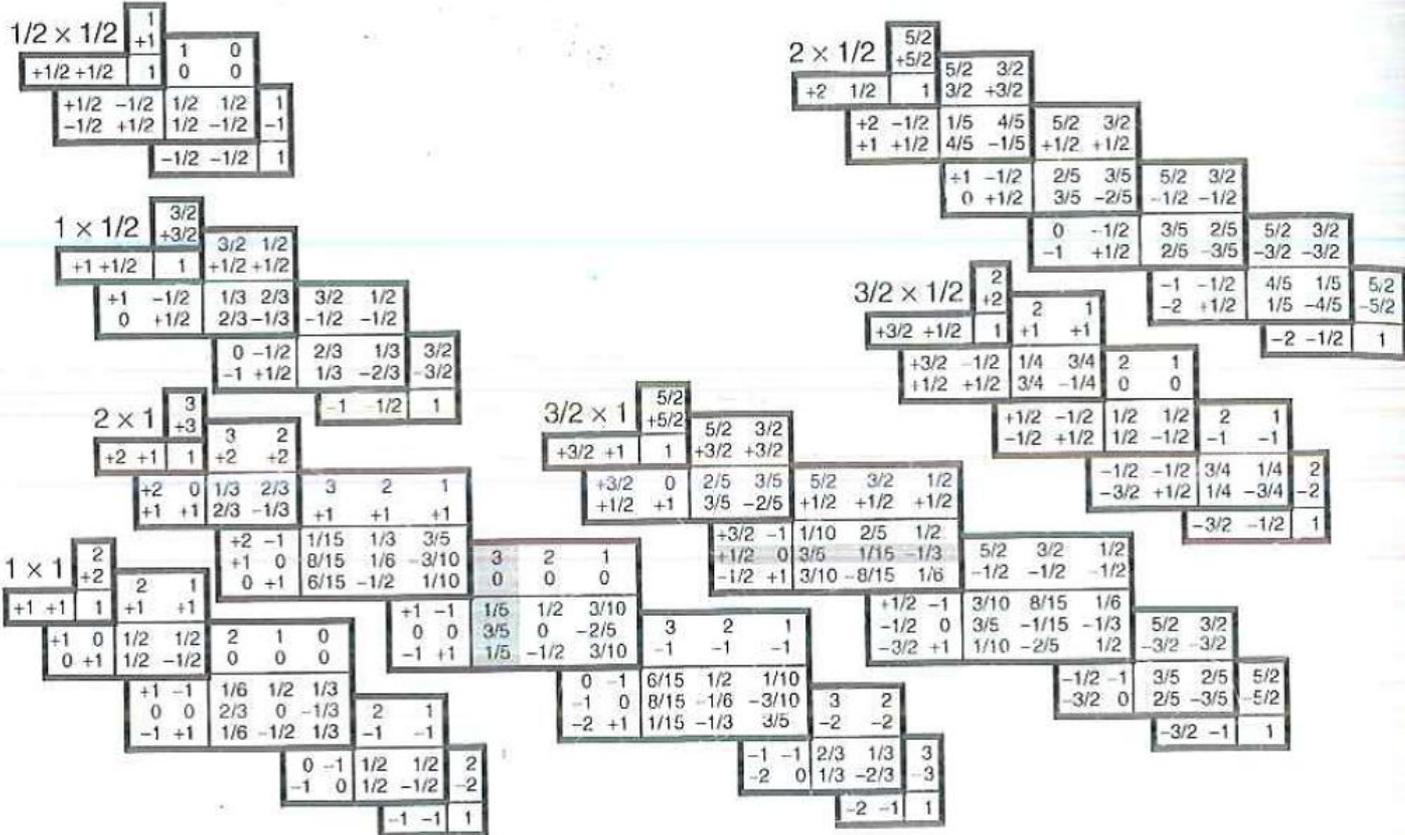
**Representation** →

**Points** →

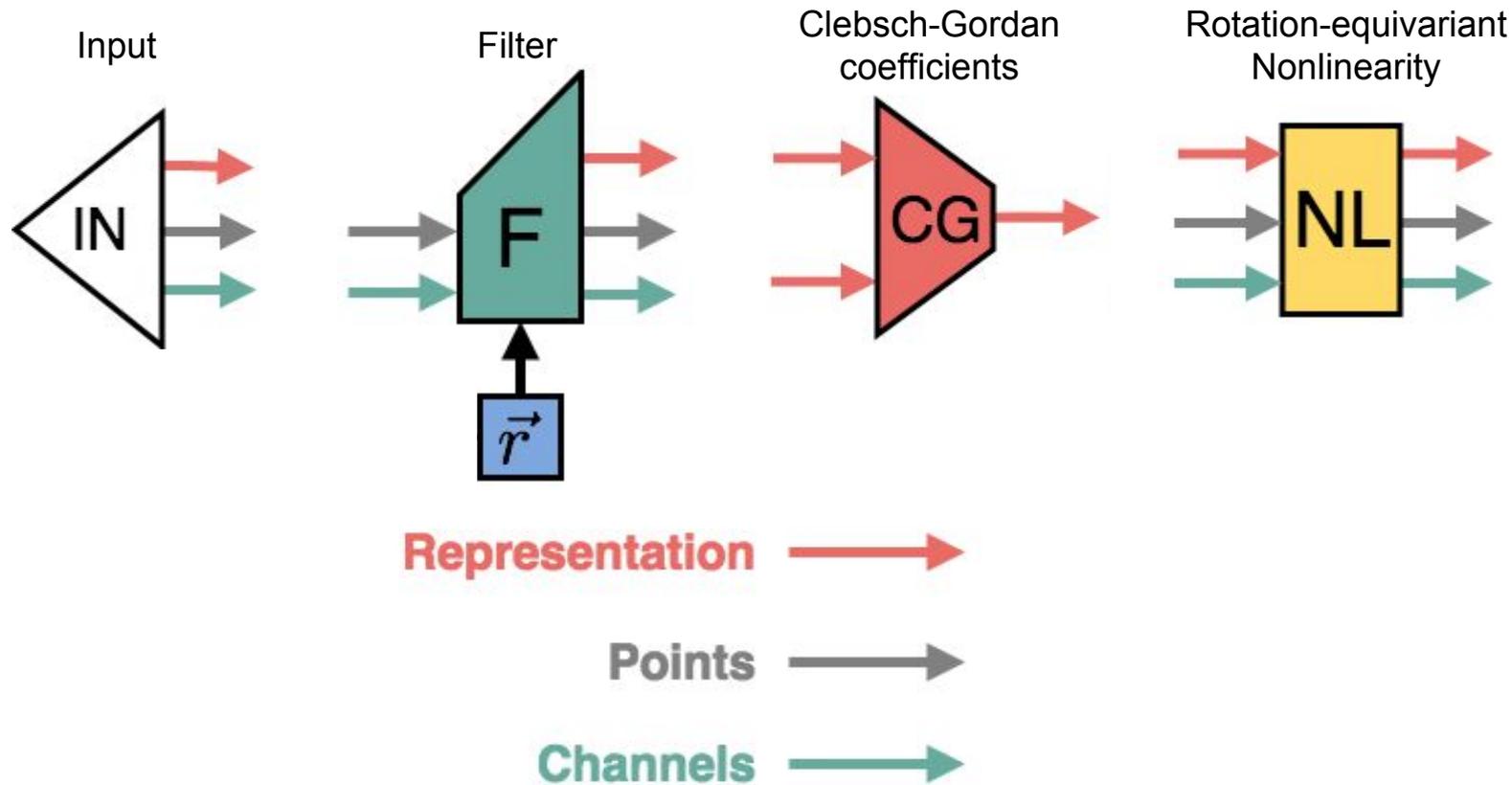
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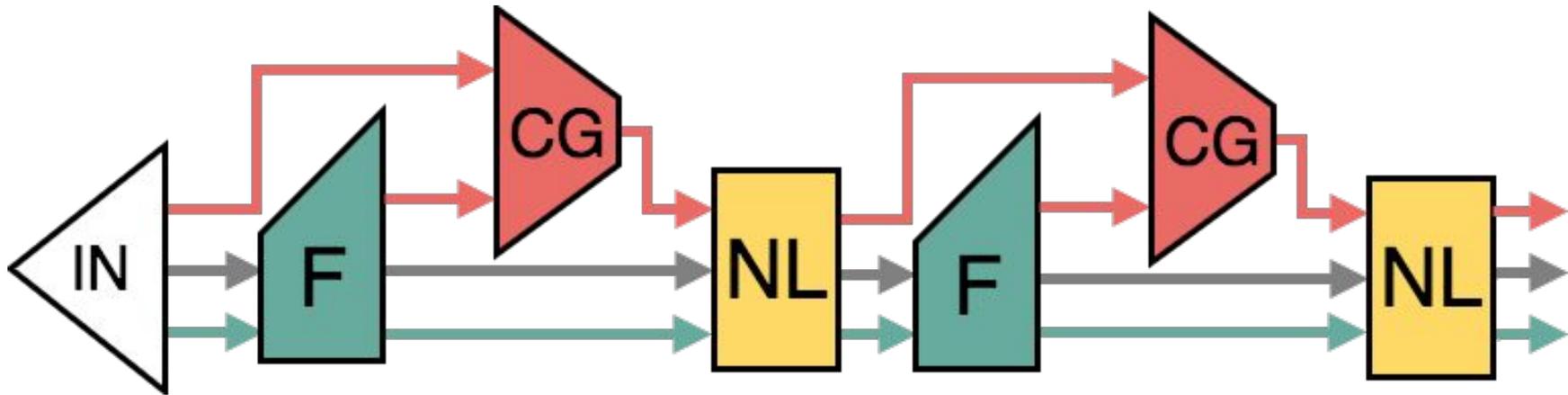
Same math involved in the addition of angular momentum.



# These are components of **tensor field networks**



This is what a two-layer tensor field network looks like:



**Representation** →

**Points** →

**Channels** →

... and this is what one layer (without NL) looks like with all the indices written out:

$$\mathcal{L}_{acm_O}^{(l_O)}(\vec{r}_a, V_{acm_I}^{(l_I)})$$
$$:= \sum_{m_F, m_I} C_{(l_F, m_F)(l_I, m_I)}^{(l_O, m_O)} \sum_{b \in S} F_{cm_F}^{(l_F, l_I)}(\vec{r}_{ab}) V_{bcm_I}^{(l_I)}$$

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$$F_{cm_F}^{(l_F, l_I)}(\vec{r}_{ab}) = R_c^{(l_F, l_I)}(r_{ab}) Y_{m_F}^{(l_F)}(\hat{r}_{ab})$$

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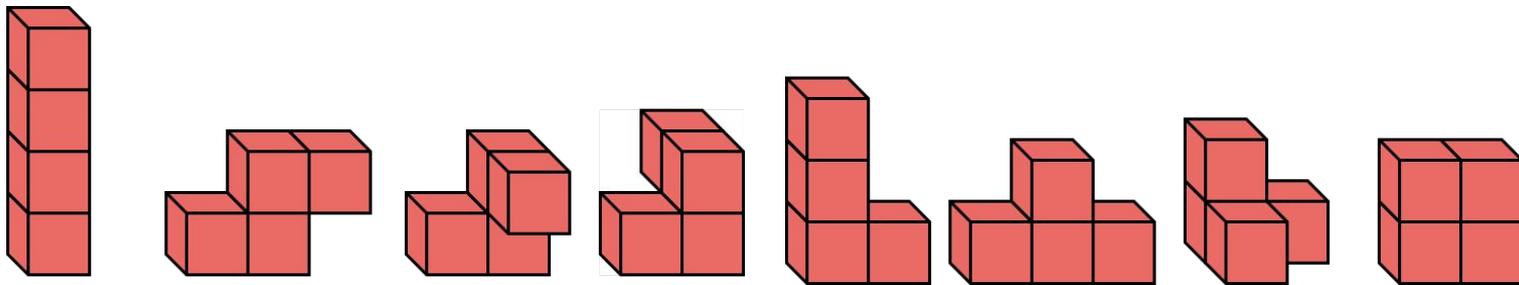
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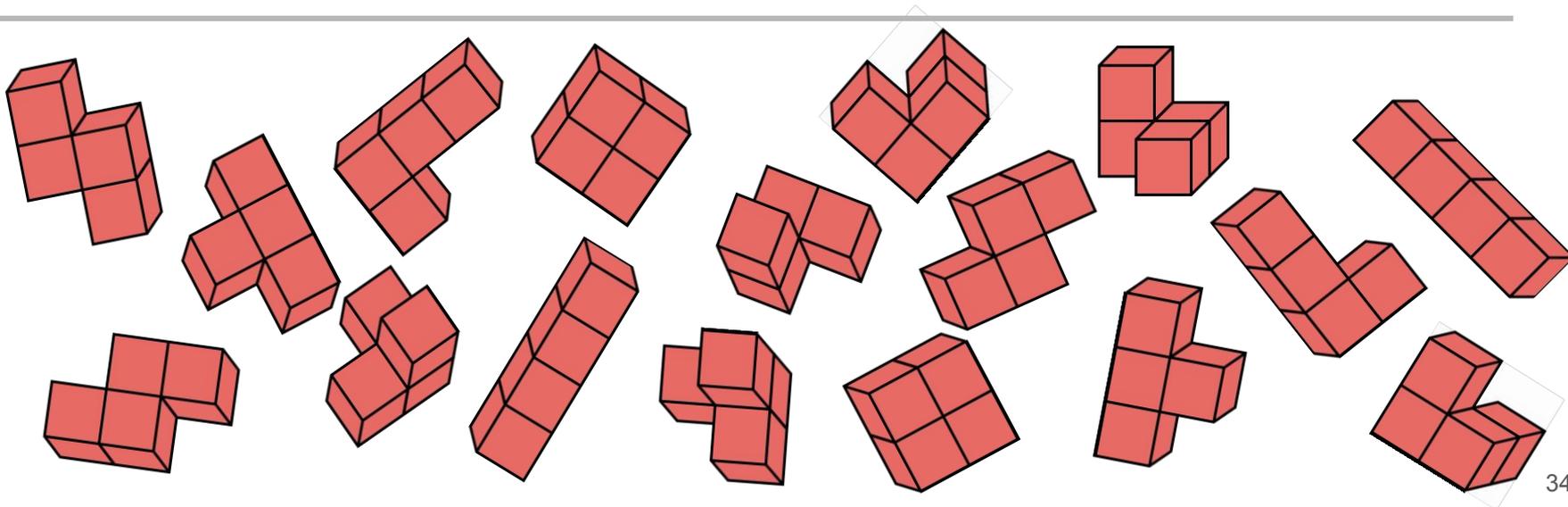
$$R_c^{(l_F, l_I)}(r_{ab}) = \sum_h W_{ch} \text{NL}\left(\sum_j W_{hj} B_j(r_{ab}) + b_h\right) + b_c$$

**Test of 3D rotation equivariance:** Trained on 3D Tetris shapes in one orientation, our network can perfectly identify these shapes in any orientation.

**TRAIN**

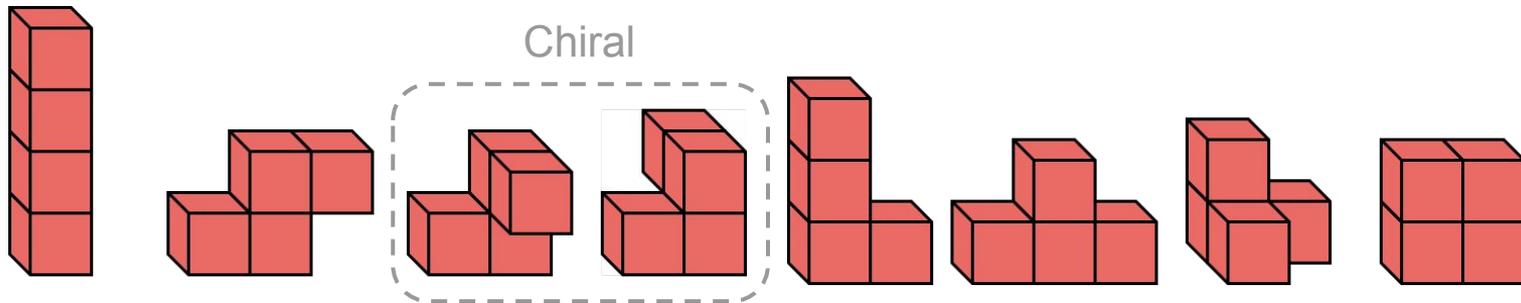


**TEST**

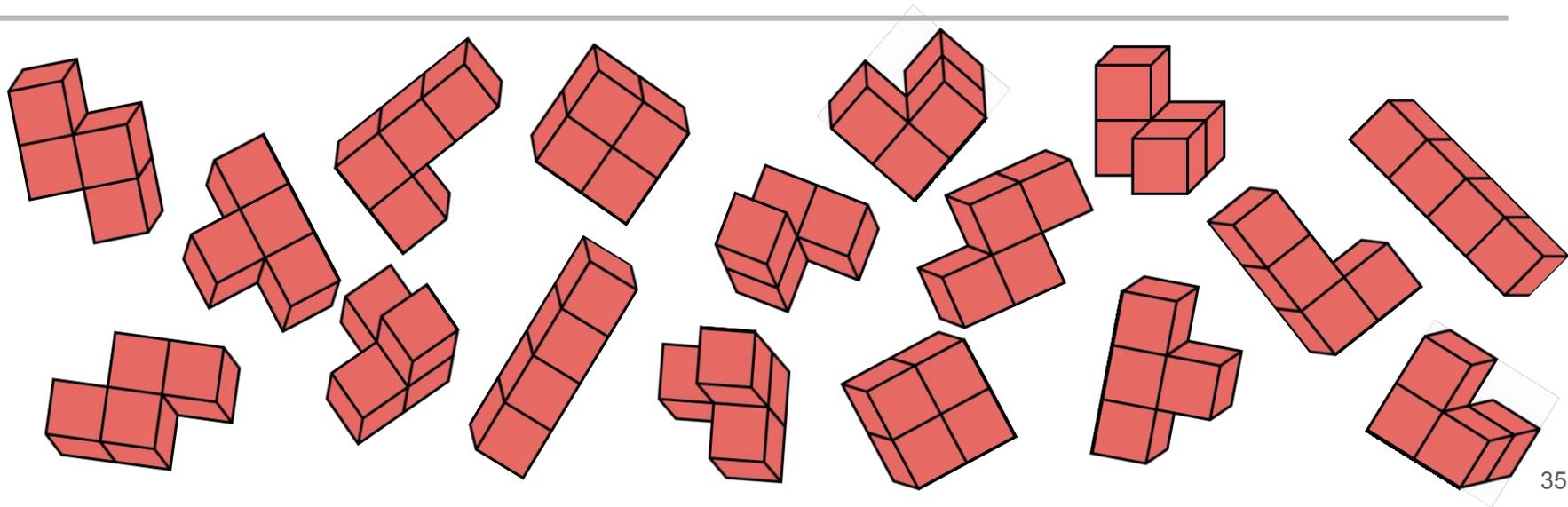


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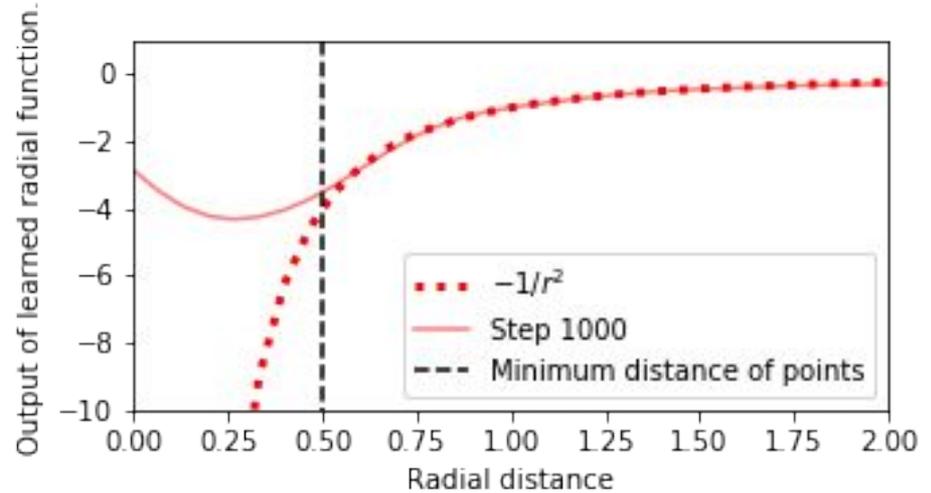
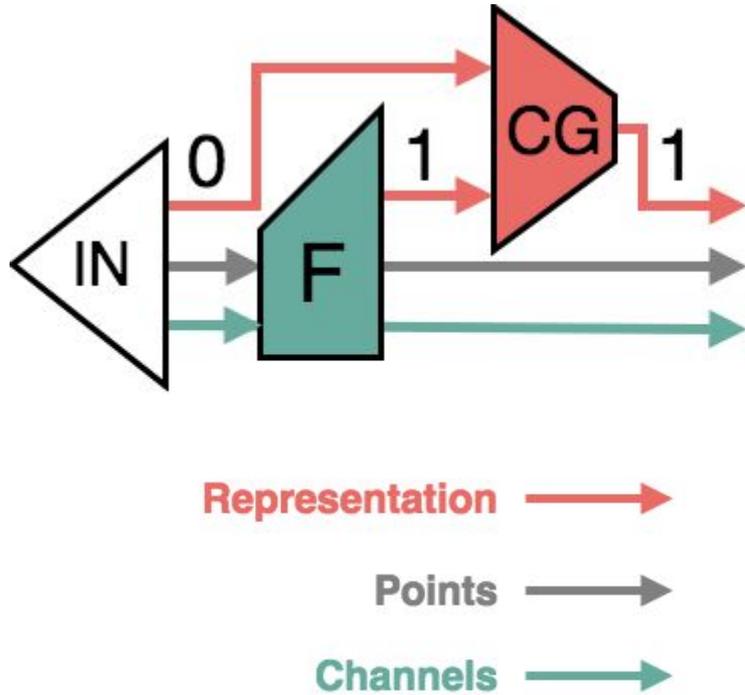
**TRAIN**



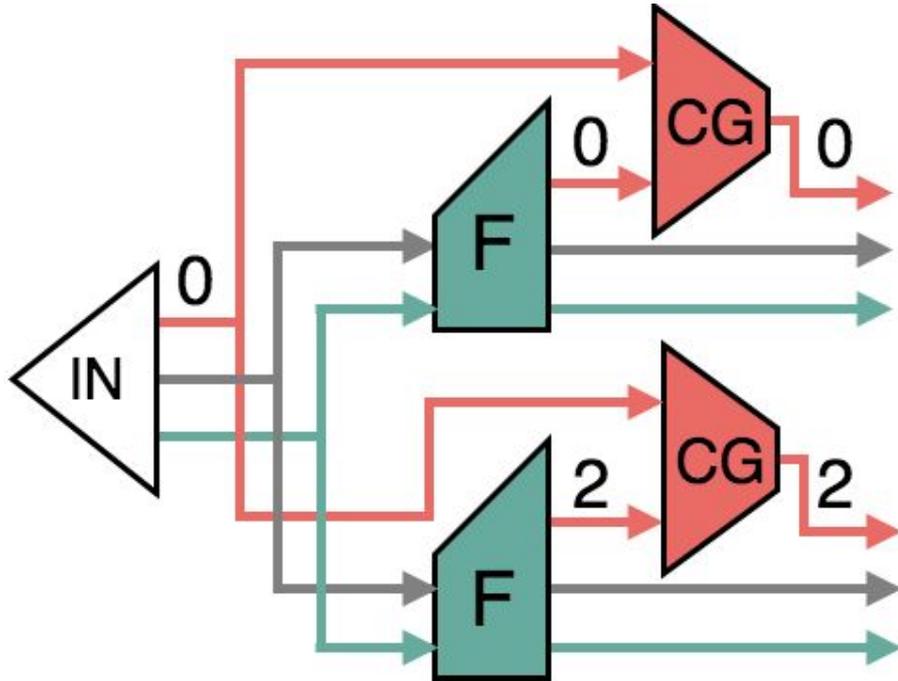
**TEST**



**We can start with tensor input of any type and use filters to get tensor output of any type.**  
In this task, scalar masses are input and gravitational acceleration vectors are output.



**We can start with tensor input of any type and use filters to get tensor output of any type.**  
 In this task, scalar masses are input and the moment of inertia tensor (a symmetric matrix) is output.

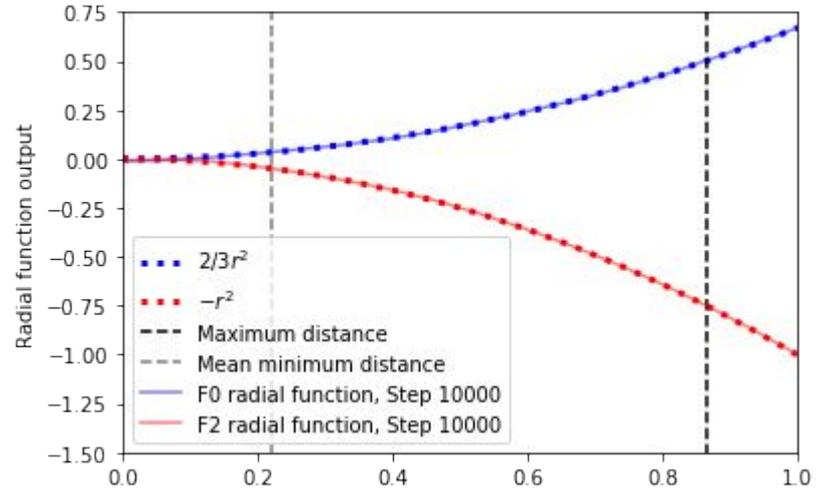


**Representation** →

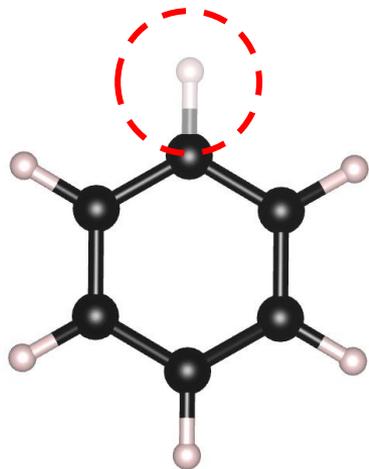
**Points** →

**Channels** →

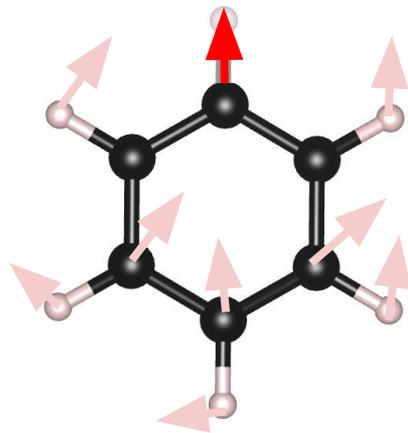
Moment of inertia:  
 0 (trace) + 2 (symmetric traceless)



Given a small organic molecule with an atom removed, replace the correct element at the correct location in space.



Input coordinates with missing atom.



Network outputs  
(N-1) atom type features (scalars),  
(N-1) displacement vectors, and  
(N-1) scalars indicating confidence  
probability used for "voting".

#### DATASET

QM9: <http://www.quantum-machine.org/datasets/>  
134k molecules with 9 or less heavy atoms  
(non-hydrogen) and elements H, C, N, O, F.

#### TRAIN

1,000 molecules with 5-18 atoms

#### TEST

1,000 molecules with 19 atoms  
1,000 molecules with 23 atoms  
1,000 molecules with 25-29 atoms

Atoms	Number of predictions	Accuracy (%) ( $\leq 0.5 \text{ \AA}$ and atom type)	Distance MAE in $\text{\AA}$
5-18 (train)	15 947	92.6	0.16
19	19 000	94.7	0.15
23	23 000	96.9	0.14
25-29	25 404	97.8	0.17

Learns to replace atoms with over 90% accuracy across train and test by seeing the same 1,000 molecules 200 times.

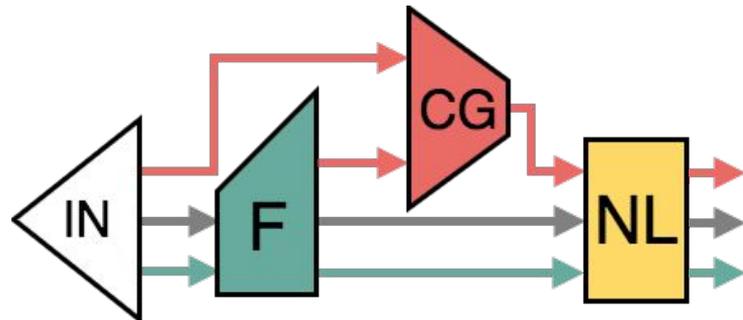
## Conclusion

We've created a neural network architecture that operates on points and has the symmetries of 3D Euclidean space (3D translation- and 3D rotation-equivariance).

We use convolutional filters restricted to spherical harmonics with a learned radial function.

As a consequence of this choice of filter, the inputs, filters, and outputs of our network are geometric tensor fields.

We expect this network to be generally useful for tasks in geometry, physics and chemistry.



Paper:  
arXiv:1802.08219

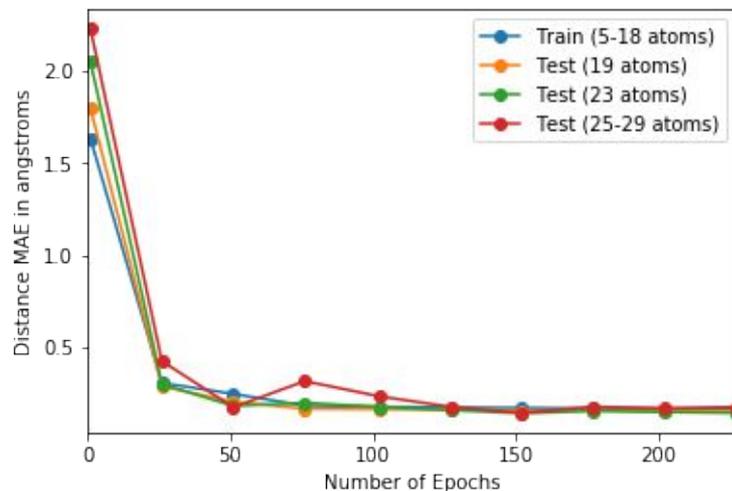
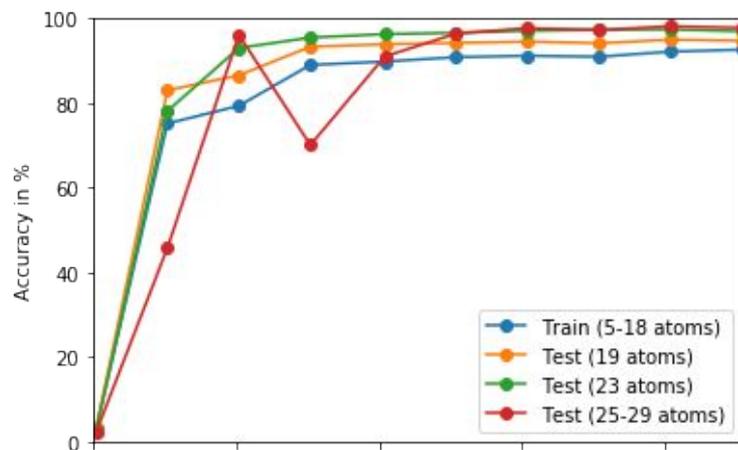
Code for paper:  
<https://github.com/tensorfieldnetworks/tensorfieldnetworks>

Refactor coming soon:  
<https://github.com/marioeiger/se3cnn>

Calling in backup (slides)!

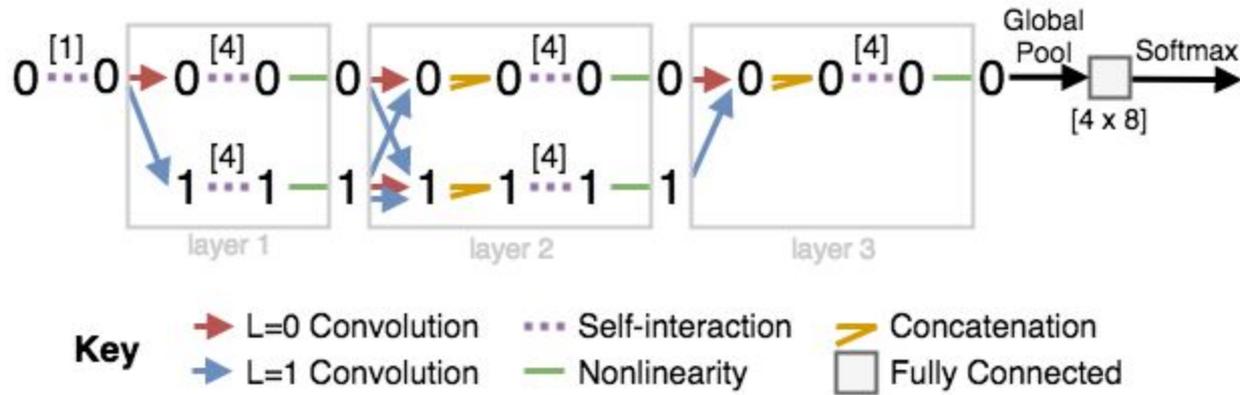


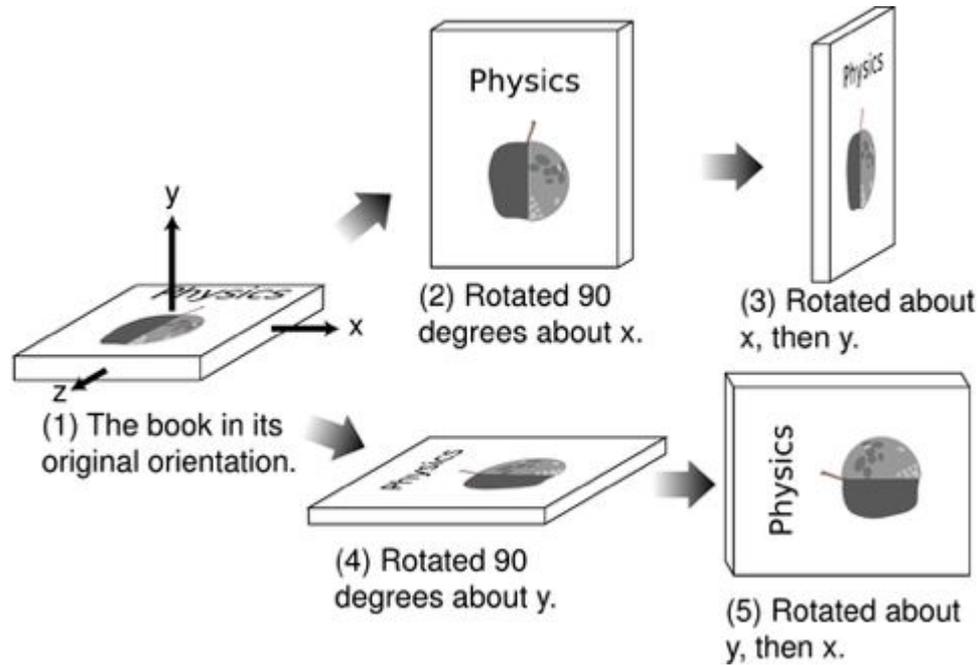
## Missing point task results



Atoms	Number of atoms with given type in set	Accuracy (%) ( $\leq 0.5 \text{ \AA}$ and atom type)	Distance MAE in $\text{\AA}$
<b>Hydrogen</b>			
5-18 (train)	7269	94.6	0.16
19	10067	92.9	0.17
23	14004	96.4	0.15
25-29	16409	97.8	0.19
<b>Carbon</b>			
5-18 (train)	5713	94.6	0.16
19	6812	99.8	0.10
23	7851	99.9	0.11
25-29	8272	99.8	0.14
<b>Nitrogen</b>			
5-18 (train)	1426	84.2	0.16
19	599	86.3	0.19
23	48	91.7	0.19
25-29	17	58.8	0.20
<b>Oxygen</b>			
5-18 (train)	1498	85.7	0.16
19	1522	87.5	0.20
23	1097	82.9	0.21
25-29	706	73.1	0.21
<b>Fluorine</b>			
5-18 (train)	41	0.0	0.12
19	0		
23	0		
25-29	0		

### 3D Tetris classification network diagram

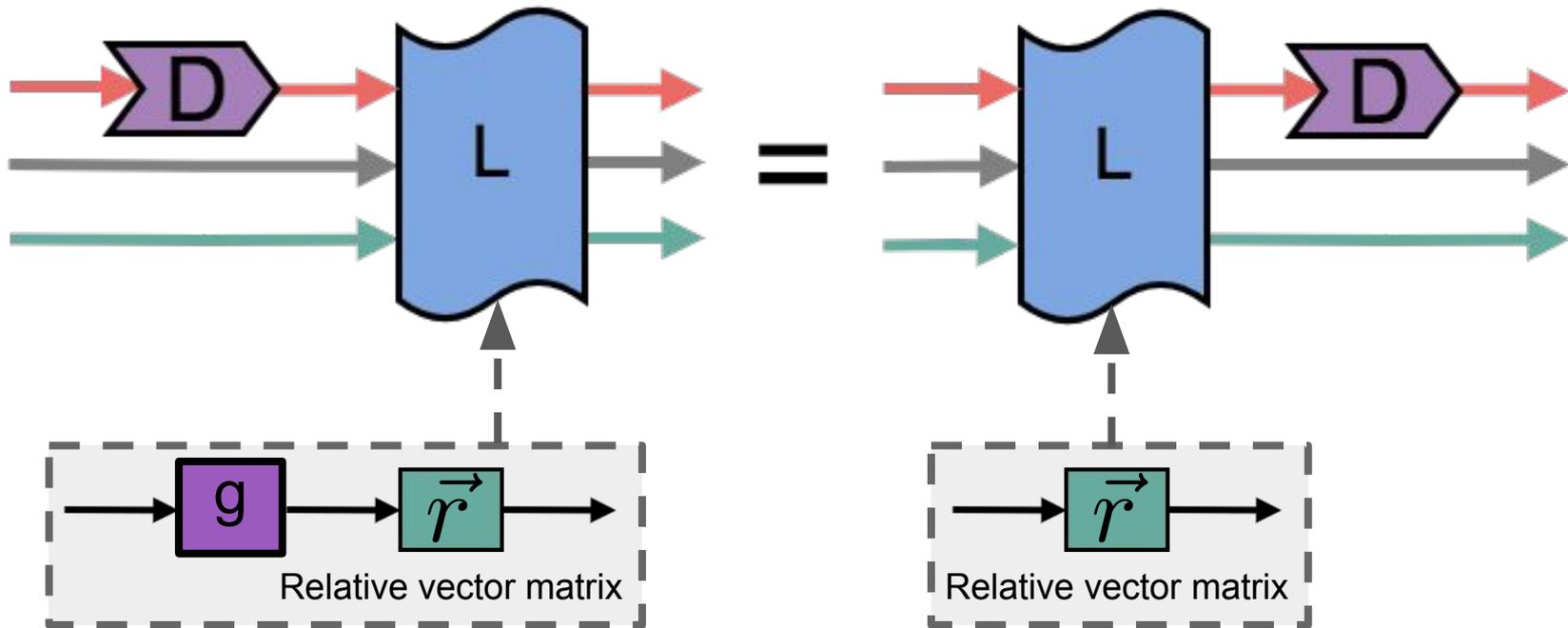




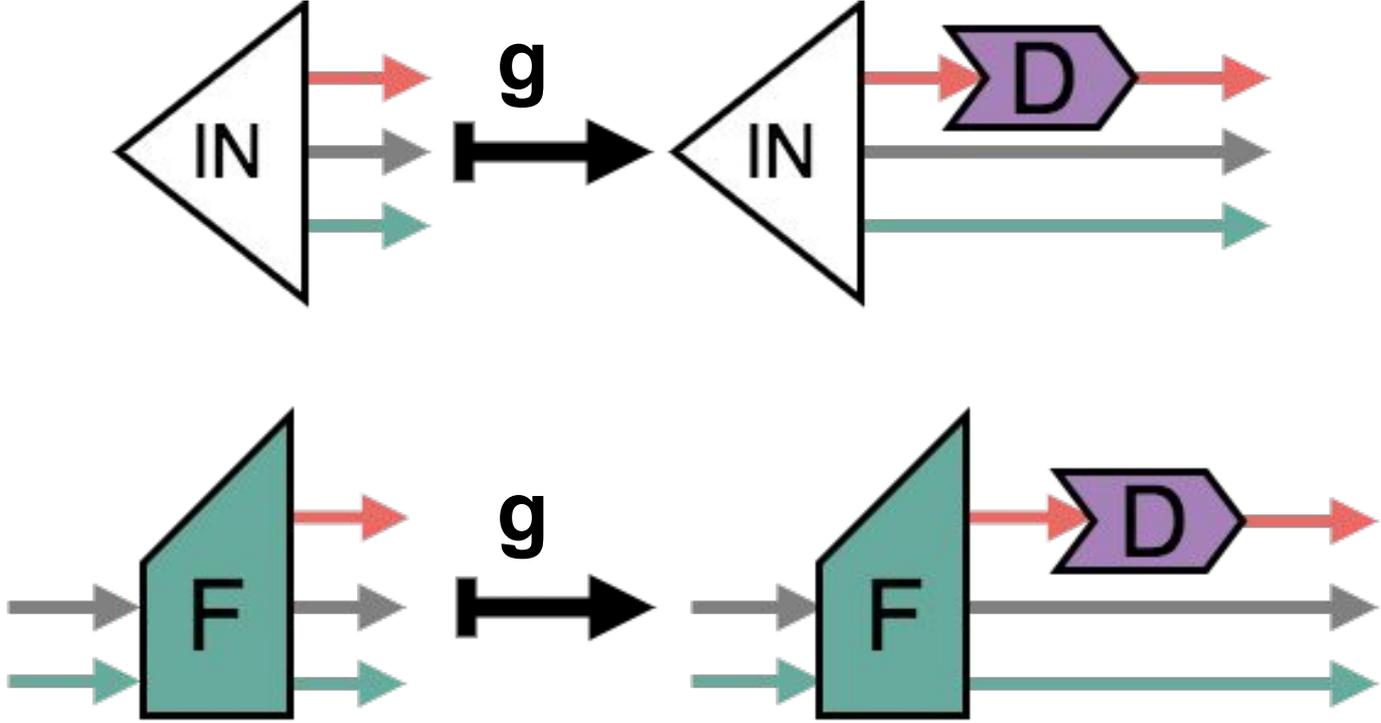
Benjamin Crowell, General Relativity, p. 256.

# visual proof of 3d rotation equivariance

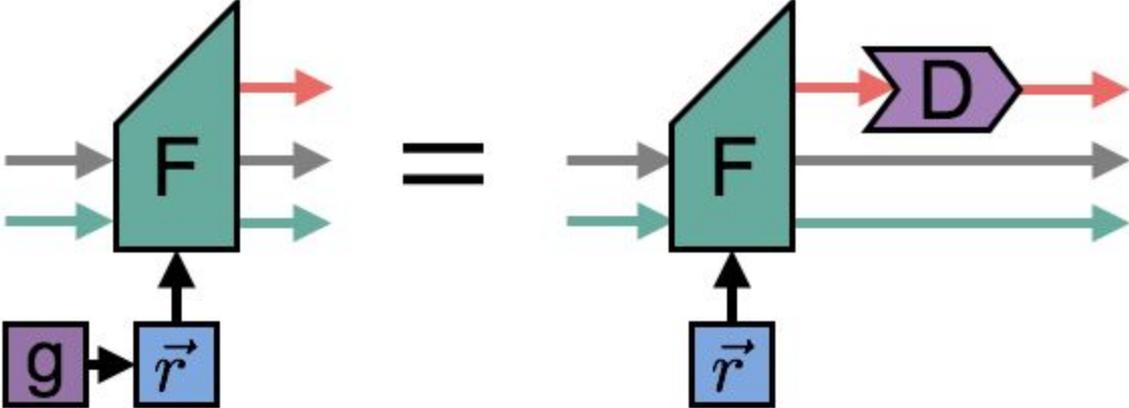
To be rotation-equivariant, the following relationship must hold for each layer:



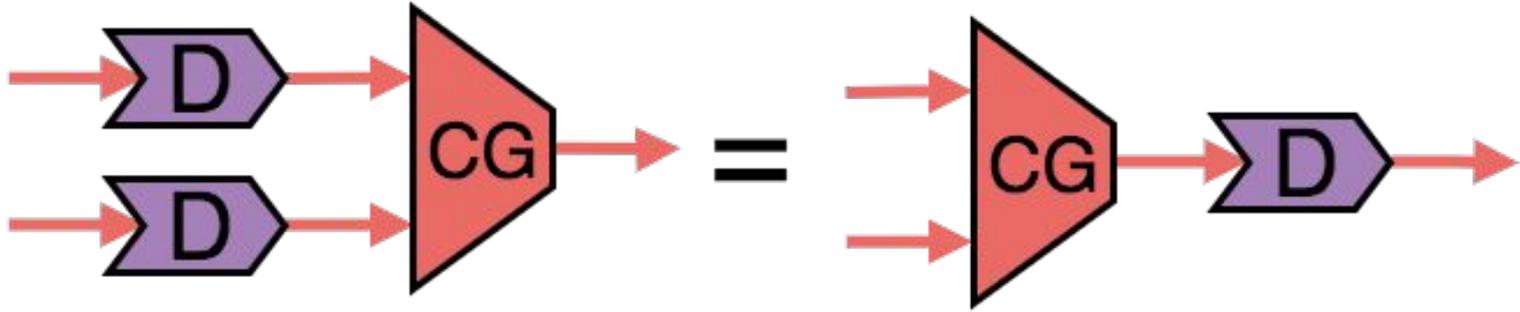
Each component of the network must be individually rotation-equivariant to guarantee the network rotation equivariance.



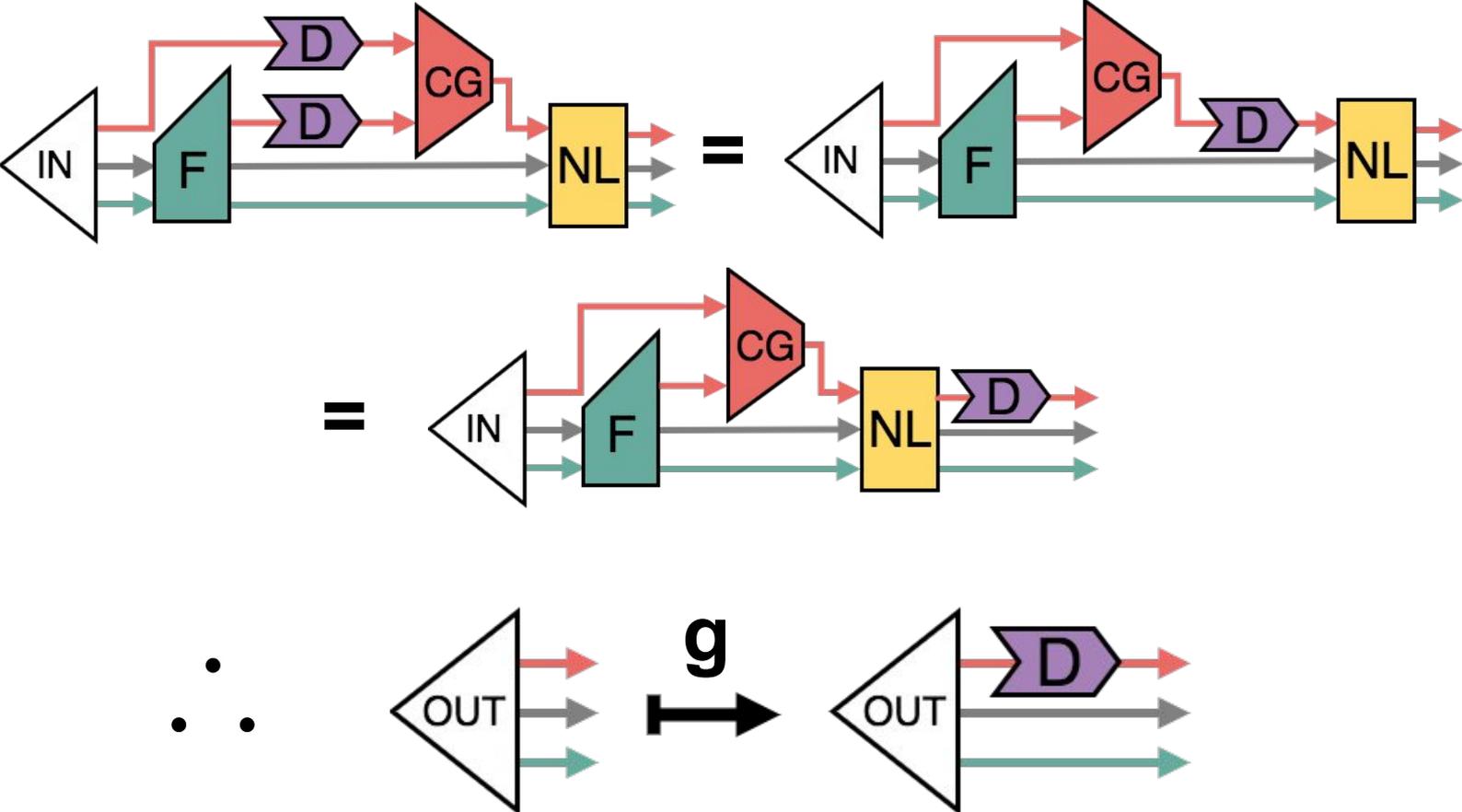
More explicitly...



The key property of the Clebsch-Gordan coefficient tensor:



Putting it all together, we can show that the layers are equivariant.



# What's a tensor product?



scalar multiplication makes sense:

"scalar"  
from a  
field  $F$

$$c\vec{v} = \text{okay!}$$

"vector" from a  
vector space,  $V$



but what if we want to multiply two vectors?



from another  
vector space,  $U$

???

$$\vec{u} \text{ "times" } \vec{v} = \text{CONFUSION! ?}$$



what do we mean by "times"??

ANSWER: the TENSOR PRODUCT!

$$U \otimes_F V$$

**Examples of tensor algebra:** How to combine a scalar and a vector? Easy!

Irreducible  
Representations

$$a \times \vec{b} = \vec{c}$$

1

## Examples of tensor algebra: How to combine two vectors? Many ways.

**Dot product**  $(a_i \ a_j \ a_k) \begin{pmatrix} b_i \\ b_j \\ b_k \end{pmatrix} = c$

**Cross product**  $\vec{a} \times \vec{b} = \begin{vmatrix} \hat{i} & \hat{j} & \hat{k} \\ a_i & a_j & a_k \\ b_i & b_j & b_k \end{vmatrix} = \vec{c}$

**Outer product**  $\begin{pmatrix} a_i \\ a_j \\ a_k \end{pmatrix} (b_i \ b_j \ b_k) = \begin{pmatrix} a_i b_i & a_i b_j & a_i b_k \\ a_j b_i & a_j b_j & a_j b_k \\ a_k b_i & a_k b_j & a_k b_k \end{pmatrix}$

Irreducible  
Representations

0

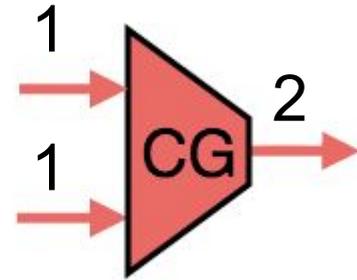
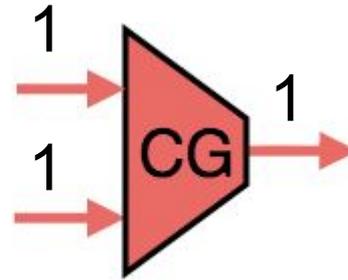
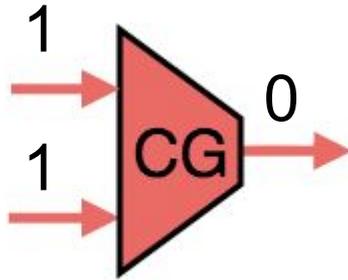
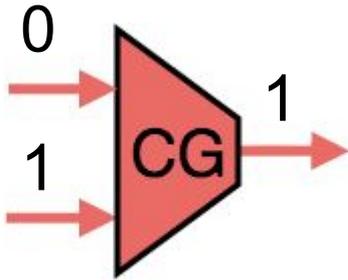
1

$0 \oplus 1 \oplus 2$

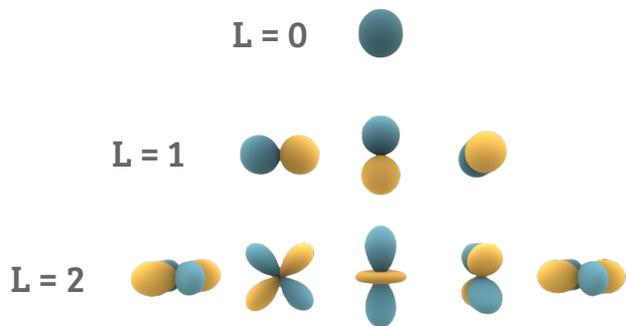
To combine two tensors to create one tensor, we use Clebsch-Gordan coefficients.

$$0 \otimes 1 = 1$$

$$1 \otimes 1 = 0 \oplus 1 \oplus 2$$



Our filter choice requires the structure of our network to be compatible with the algebra of **geometric tensors**.



$$\propto (x, y, z)$$

$$\propto (xy, yz, zx, 2z^2 - x^2 - y^2, x^2 - y^2)$$

(Smooth, decaying) Vector fields can be decomposed into a conservative field and a solenoid field. A conservative vector field can be expressed as the gradient of a scalar field and the solenoidal field as the curl of a vector field.

